

single year than ever before. In my home State, that translated to a record-low uninsured rate of just 4 percent. That means 96 percent of Minnesotans have health insurance, which is a great improvement over where it was.

Millions more Minnesotans and Americans now have the peace of mind that comes with affordable, quality health coverage. Eligible households in Minnesota have an annual average ACA tax credit of \$3,600. That is \$3,600 freed up for housing, gas, and groceries, while maintaining access to healthcare. But unless Congress acts to make the enhanced, family-friendly tax credits currently set to expire at the end of 2022 permanent, millions of Americans will have the rug pulled out from under them, likely seeing a double-digit hike on their health insurance premiums. Karen Tumulty, a columnist for the Washington Post, called it a “ticking time bomb.”

If these tax credits are not made permanent, 70,000 Minnesotans—or 61 percent of Minnesota families—purchasing health insurance on their own could see a 35- to 41-percent increase in their health insurance premiums, and over 10,000 Minnesotans could lose their health insurance tax credits in 2023 unless Congress acts.

In my State, Americans between the ages of 55 and 64 would be most affected, and you think about this with cost issues and inflation and all the things people are already facing. Right now, a 60-year-old Minnesota couple with a household income of \$75,000 is saving \$773 in monthly premiums. Taking away those tax credits would increase their annual health spending by at least \$9,000. That is like taking away multiple paychecks.

It is no wonder that Americans overwhelmingly support making these tax credits permanent. Doctors and patients have called on us to protect these historic gains in affordability, coverage, and equity. Families can't afford to go back to paying upwards of 20 percent or more of their monthly income toward healthcare premiums.

This is important for patients, and it is also important for providers. We know—hearing when we are back home—that many hospitals are stretched thin right now, and putting millions of Americans' healthcare in jeopardy is going to create a lot of volatility as patients are forced to disrupt their care and cancel procedures.

At a time when so many families are struggling to make ends meet, we just can't sit back and let those ACA tax credits expire. More Americans insured is good for patients, good for families, good for communities, and good for our country.

I would note one other thing I would do when it comes to healthcare, and that is making sure that we allow Medicare to negotiate prices under Medicare Part D for pharmaceuticals. While our communities are facing the potential of this—what the Washington

Post called a “ticking time bomb”—we also must act when it comes to pharmaceuticals because those prices are also going up.

I have just presented two really straightforward ways that we can help families with costs when it comes to healthcare. One is making sure we keep in place the tax credits that protect middle-class families in this country, and the second is to make sure we allow Medicare to negotiate better prices under Medicare Part D because when you look at what is happening right now, we continue to see major drugs—major drugs—go up, doubling, go up 200 percent, 300 percent, to the point where we are already paying double what they pay in Canada for a significant number of drugs. For Minnesota, that is right across the border.

We must allow, in my mind, reimportation of less expensive drugs, but the biggest game changer would be to lift the ban that the pharmaceutical companies got in place in law that says Medicare, representing tens of millions of seniors, is not allowed to negotiate cheaper prices. That is what the VA does, and it has been really good for our veterans. We should allow the same help for 46 million seniors. It will be good for all Americans because it will bring down the taxpayer expense in part of the payment of drugs, and it will be good for individual consumers. So let's get these two things done.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I just want to say I know many of us recognized your enormous service yesterday, and we really appreciate it and so much today, the day after your 50th birthday, appreciate the fact that you are presiding over this august body.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON GOMEZ NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Gomez nomination?

Ms. BALDWIN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 51, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 219 Ex.]

YEAS—49

Baldwin	Brown	Casey
Bennet	Cantwell	Coons
Blumenthal	Cardin	Cortez Masto
Booker	Carper	Duckworth

Durbin
Feinstein
Gillibrand
Hassan
Heinrich
Hickenlooper
Hirono
Kaine
Kelly
King
Klobuchar
Leahy
Lujan

Manchin
Markey
Menendez
Merkley
Murphy
Murray
Ossoff
Padilla
Peters
Reed
Rosen
Sanders
Schatz

Shaheen
Sinema
Smith
Stabenow
Tester
Van Hollen
Warner
Warnock
Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

NAYS—51

Barrasso
Blackburn
Blunt
Boozman
Braun
Burr
Capito
Cassidy
Collins
Cornyn
Cotton
Cramer
Crapo
Cruz
Daines
Ernst
Fischer

Graham
Grassley
Hagerty
Hawley
Hoeven
Hyde-Smith
Inhofe
Johnson
Kennedy
Lankford
Lee
Lummis
Marshall
McConnell
Moran
Murkowski
Paul

Portman
Risch
Romney
Rounds
Rubio
Sasse
Schumer
Scott (FL)
Scott (SC)
Shelby
Sullivan
Thune
Tillis
Toomey
Tuberville
Wicker
Young

The nomination was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). The majority leader.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I enter a motion to reconsider.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Nina Morrison, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York.

VOTE ON MORRISON NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Morrison nomination?

Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY).

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 220 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Baldwin
Bennet
Blumenthal
Booker
Brown
Cantwell
Cardin
Carper
Casey
Collins
Coons
Cortez Masto
Duckworth
Durbin
Feinstein
Gillibrand

Graham
Hassan
Heinrich
Hickenlooper
Hirono
Kaine
Kelly
King
Klobuchar
Leahy
Lujan
Manchin
Markey
Menendez
Merkley
Murkowski

Murphy
Murray
Ossoff
Padilla
Peters
Reed
Rosen
Sanders
Schatz
Schumer
Shaheen
Sinema
Smith
Stabenow
Tester